

Boyd Camak

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podcast grab bag and a few other things topics etc. (draft)

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Posted on [October 8, 2025](#) by [Boyd Camak](#),
[hypocrite with logs in my eyes. \(Matthew 7:3-5\)](#)
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As I've said before, I remember reading an Eastern Orthodox blog and it said in the right hand column of the blog that the only sane people are the saints, the only sane people are the

When I started in tech sales circa 2007, one of the first things they said in training was, you don't want to sound like vendor verbal vomit. This blog is vendor verbal vomit. The only thing I have to sell is sin, confusion, blindness, vice, disorder, profanity, despair, and death. I hear that sometimes the Holy Spirit

Choose	saints. So that’s when I decided I	uses this
Boyd Camak	Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa	
October 7, 2025	wanted to be known as some great person. In fact, you know, there’s that line from... I can’t remember the pithy phrase or the the the clever wording.	cliches and foolishness to do some good.
Creedence Clearwater Revival – Up Around The Bend	The saint who was instrumental in the helping workers in the 20th century.	***FREE. TAKE IT.***
October 7, 2025	Anyway, she said something along the lines of, you know, basically don’t don’t let me lose my credibility so quickly by making me a saint. And I remember recently reflecting on St. Francis who was a badass and that he went and talked directly to the enemies that were fighting his crew or whatever. But he’s been kind of neutered in the public imagination that as this kind of flower child. Anyway, but all that to say, you know, sanity is sainthood, but the problem is we have, I have anyway a variety of distorted understandings of what Saint-Hood is. You know, as I think about it, really what Saint-Hood is, what sanity is, is living in accordance with reality. And reality is it appears paradoxical to us. Everybody talks about the wisdom of the cross, this foolishness, which is probably to me one of the most important part of the Bible, where St. Paul talks about the foolishness of the cross. But the reason the gospel is paradoxical or the reason that it appears paradoxical is because we are spiritually sick. We are existentially sick and Jesus came, Jesus crashed into our reality because	*ABANDONED SECTION*
Evening reflection (in 2 parts because my iphone voice recorder cut off and I couldn’t get it to resume)		Thrown / Disoriented / Unmoored [DRAFT--better blog navigation under construction]
October 6, 2025		About art and music (draft)
These people (and many others) have helped me on the journey.		backups
October 6, 2025		Contact Me
Here’s a pretty good list of what helped me. (Or as the flattery bots put it, “my influences.””)		expired
🤔🤔🤔 [I thought that		fine print
		Index of
		Writings
		podcast grab
		bag and a few other things
		topics etc. (draft)

[Jesus was in](#)

He loves us and He wants to heal us.

Boyd Camak

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[somewhere...\]](#)October 6,
2025[\(no title\)](#)October 6,
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video clip](#)October 5,
2025[life of Christ >
theories about it](#)October 4,
2025[yep. that
sounds right.
also you just
helped me to
see that the
Christian
Industrial
Complex is
much worse
that I realized
"They've
industrialized
the path
TO God."](#)October 4,
2025

healing and is the path to being aligned with reality and doing that makes you look foolish because the world is misaligned with reality. All the things the world promises that will give us happiness don't deliver. The only thing that delivers is being united with reality. And reality is Jesus. And the way to be united with Jesus is to be co-crucified with Jesus. And so that's why Jesus says, consider the cost before you decide to follow Him. He says, "Look, you know, He

That's why Jesus says, "Consider the cost." He says that, you know, if you start to build your house and then realize you don't have enough materials to complete the project, then people are going to laugh at you. Now of course, if you're following Jesus, you don't give a shit if people are laughing at you because they crucified Jesus, they didn't just laugh at him, they didn't just mock him, they crucified him. And so, you know, if you're following Jesus, you are willing to be co-crucified with him. And you know, hopefully for us, that just means, essentially or spiritually, but you know, hopefully for us, that just means, existentially or spiritually, but there are martyrs who physically give their life. But anyway, so, so again, getting back to this idea of being a saint as the path

I wish this	to sanity, this idea of being a saint as	
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foundation for real ecumenism	you have to look at reality and I think anybody that’s paying attention realizes that this world is not right and there’s a lot of ways to express that. And for my money, there’s only one way to deal with that. And that is by being co-crucified and feeling his presence. And we all have to go on our journey. We all have to search. Anybody’s journey is different, but we do know that God loves all of us. But my experience is when I encounter Christ existentially, when I can’t attach my suffering to his suffering, it has meaning and it gives me a way out. You know, otherwise, as far as I can tell, you only have two other options being a total cynic, a nihilist, nihilist, whatever the way I’ve been pronounce it. And I have a great sympathy for that for that view. Or you can be kind of a hallmark movie person where everything’s perfect all the time. Happy, happy, happy, happy positive, positive, positive. And that’s not a path that I can go down. Maybe, I guess it’s, you know, look, I’m not gonna judge anybody. Life’s a bitch, so, you know, look, I’m not gonna judge anybody, life’s a bitch, so, you know, we’re all trying to do the best we can. But I think that the gospel, you know, the gospel, the good news that the gospel is that Jesus, who is the God-man, God in the middle of all this shit with us, who is	
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claude.ai—Can you tell me more about why it’s original and wild (a good thing)		
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Survival_Notes, Not_Systematic_Theology__Why_Suffering_Demands		
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Why Suffering Doesn’t Disqualify Theological Witness—It Often Demands It		
October 3, 2025		

Demanifesto	the God-man, God into the middle of	
Boyd Camak	Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa	
October 3, 2025 Some reflections on today's lectionary readings. October 1, 2025 Please let me know if you have any post pics for this next collection. October 1, 2025 (no title) September 30, 2025 Draft intro for a new resource I plan to pull together. September 29, 2025 suffering & knowledge September 28, 2025 Boyd Camak's Trauma-Informed Theology: Applications Beyond Religio	to kill him, and it didn't work. Jesus says, "Do to me whatever you want to do." He allowed the world to crucify him. Heaped shame and abuse and scorn and physical pain. I remember hearing a sermon about an artifact, some poor guy that had been crucified around the time Jesus lived, he was apparently a criminal, and they had a, you can go on Wikipedia and see this nail, this nail that had kind of been pounded through the back of his ankle. I mean, it was just this excruciating artifact. I mean, I've talked about the gospel as a gas chamber, you know, as a lynching tree, as a electric chair, you know, to try to kind of rouse myself out of this complicity or not complicity complacency, you know. I've called it a violent bloody spectacle because it, you know, I have to remind myself like what, you know, the literal horror of the cross, the horror. Anyway, so the point is that, you know, Jesus, the God man, comes down from heaven. And we don't need to get into it, as I've said many times, ancient cosmology. You know, it doesn't matter if, you know, Jesus landed in a UFO ship or whether he just, you know, in some mysterious existential way was, you know, conceived by the Holy Spirit born the Virgin Mary. You know, he got here and I'll let him worry about the details about that. That doesn't help me. I need to	

n September	know how he can help me. Now, how	
Boyd Camak	Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa	
Biblical Analogies of Divine Empowerment and Action	need to know how he can help me, not how he got here. And so the reason that the cross is so closely associated with the testimony of Jesus from the earliest part of the tradition, Christ crucified was the earliest, from the earliest part of the tradition, the crucifixion was associated with Christ. It wasn't just his teaching. Now, I see his teaching and his life, his birth life and death and resurrection, I see that all is a unified whole. But I think that when you understand, you know, you can never understand. But I think when we try to understand the cross and what it means, I think not only do we get to the crux of Jesus' life, his ultimate sacrifice, but we get to a point where, you know, we had to make a choice. And if we decided to, you know, to follow Jesus, as I said before, just the way the world, the way the spiritual life works, it's not like Jesus is saying, "You gotta give it, you gotta put all your chips on me because I'm an egomaniac." It's like Jesus is saying, "Hey, I'm here, I'm the life ring, I'm here to rescue you." "It's funky how it works because the world is funky and you got to trust me because my way is the actual truth and you're being lied to by this worldly system that tells you that you know all these things are going to give you happiness when they don't" and Jesus is saying hey I'm here	
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Spiritual Surrender as a Secular Job Search Strategy (podcast)		
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Finding Strength in a job search in a difficult market		
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I have a hunch...		
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For The Trenches		

September 15,	I'm your Savior I want to rescue you	
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Debate:	ring and it's kind of like you know if you	
Beyond Labels:	want to go with Jesus and be saved,	
Encountering C	you got to grab the life ring, you got to	
hrist	hold on. And if you try to like hedge	
September	your bets, you just go and let him go	
12, 2025	and go and go back into the quick	
Beyond Camps:	sand. I'll just try to mix as many	
Encountering	metaphors as I can. Anyway, but all	
the Living Root	that to say that when it comes to	
September 12,	becoming a saint, it's not about getting	
2025	a teacher's pet prize. It's about	
Street Smarts:	grasping the life ring, being rescued,	
All Is Well?	and realizing that this world will crucify	
September 12,	all of us. And if we can combine our	
2025	crucifixion with Christ's crucifixion, we	
My To-Do List	can metaphysically, spiritually,	
In the Mind	whatever, you know, existentially,	
of God	whatever, you know, basically the	
September 12,	world, the world's going to do to us the	
2025	same thing it did to Jesus. If it's going	
Boyd Camak on	to do it to Jesus, it's going to do it to	
Dismantling	us. That's why Jesus said, you know, a	
Complex Theol	servant is not greater than his master.	
ogy	You know, you know, it's got, my view	
September	is it's going to crucify us anyway, so	
11, 2025	you might as well let Jesus make your	
Boyd Camak's	crucifixion part of Jesus' crucifixion so	
Trauma-	that you could be part of Jesus'	
Informed Theol	resurrection. And you can interpret	
ogy	resurrection in a lot of different ways,	
September	but that's another topic. You know, the	
11, 2025	alternative is to pursue, you know,	
Boyd Camak's	worldly pleasures and status and	
Perspective on	riches. And, you know, I don't think	
Psychotherapy	that, you know, I don't want to get into	
and Faith		
September 10,		
2025		

(no title)		a whole big discussion about different
Boyd Camak		Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa
2025		
The Gospel		
Doesn't		
Need Footnotes		
September 10,		
2025		
the root of our		
faith is alive		
and real, the		
live root—		
regardless of		
who wins the		
“liberal” vs.		
“conservative”		
theology debate		
September 10,		
2025		
paradoxical or		
“reversal”		
passages from		
the New		
Testament that		
speak of joy in		
sorrow, strength		
in weakness, or		
life through loss		
September 10,		
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Influences and		
Originality in		
Boyd Camak's		
Spiritual		
Writings i.e.		
writers and		
thinkers who		
		the bottom one is that, I mean I'm 47 years old right now. It's 2025. And I'm thinking to myself, well, if I had pursued amassing great riches, you know, who knows if I'd been quote unquote successful or not. But I mean, how long do you have to wait? I mean, maybe you have some, you know, maybe back in the 90s, you have these overnight millionaires with the internet or whatever. But I don't know, like, how long does it take you to accumulate a lot of money? You know, 50 years, 40 years, 60 years, you know? Like, it's like, okay, you know, you want to, like, you know, how long do you have to quote-unquote enjoy these riches before you're in a nursing home or you're dead? You know? And, you know, in what point in your life do you start to say, you know, what is what's really important? Like, you know, how many salesperson of the year awards can I win before I start to think, hmm, it's more than this, you know, and these are not easy questions, but I think Jesus is saying, heyHey, look, wake up. I'm here. I want to help you. I want you to be a saint because I want you to be sane because I want you to be joyful. I want you to be peaceful. I want you to have the fruit of the spirit. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control.” He talks about the Beatitudes, like blessed are

[have helped me](#)

the poor. And he talks about the

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[a hash of it](#) 🌀

🤪 September 10, 2025

[a few highlights](#)
September 9, 2025

[note to self](#)
[today after](#)

[a seizure](#)
September 9, 2025

[\(no title\)](#)
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[\(no title\)](#)
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[Don't be afraid](#)
[to fire](#)

[your doctors](#)
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[Testament](#)

[Christian](#)
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[Pain & Fear—a](#)
[Demanifesto](#)

[release 1.1](#)
[responsible for](#)

or blessed are the poor in spirit. And how do you apply these things in day-to-day life? That's a daily question. Jesus says, "Every day has enough trouble of its own." That's a different thing, but it's important. But the point is that when it comes to being a saint, it's not about being a teacher's pet, it's not about not ever making a mistake or never being wrong or always being ethical or, you know, getting every little religious thing right or whatever, it's about following the Way. The way with the capital of W as it talks about the New Testament, the way to freedom. And that is through Christ and it's a mystery. And it sounds foolish, just like Saint Paul says, it sounds foolish because that, and that's because the world is foolish. It's actually the truth. It's actually wisdom, but it seems foolish because the world is full of fools.

| Tagged [bible](#), [christianity](#), [faith](#), [god](#), [jesus](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Facing Reality [Edit](#)

(Cleaned Transcript)

fragmentary	Posted on October 8, 2025 by Boyd Camak ,	
Boyd Camak	Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa	
Boyd Camak h/t Søren Kierkegaard September 7, 2025 (no title) September 7, 2025 Christianity is not American. September 7, 2025 There is no “American Christianity.” There is just *Christianity.* And it’s not American. September 7, 2025 next installment on zine 2.0 draft September 6, 2025 DRAFT my fear and pain, zine 2.0.pdf September 6, 2025 from today’s lectionary September 6, 2025	Admiring the counterintuitive way. (1 Corinthians 1:18-25) The single source, an excerpt titled “The Absurd Paradox of the Cross,” presents a philosophical and theological argument that authentic human existence is characterized by pain and disorientation , a reality acknowledged by figures like Jesus and the Buddha. The author critiques contemporary Christianity for failing to confront the painful reality of the human condition , instead offering sanitized, superficial programs for happiness. The central claim is that the paradoxical suffering and execution of Jesus on the cross —“a dead man on a tree”—is the only genuine answer to how to be truly human, offering profound internal freedom, joy that coexists with pain, and protection against delusion . Ultimately, the text argues that wrestling with this “absurd” paradox of a crucified God is necessary for transformation and achieving a resilient, peaceful existence, rejecting industrialized religion that ignores existential misery. Absolutely — that transcript has a powerful raw voice, and I can polish it just enough to make it more readable without sanding off the edge or the lived, searching tone. Here’s a cleaned-up version that keeps your	

[It's so great to](#)

original cadence, blunt honesty, and

Boyd Camak

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[on-demand 🎧](#)[😓 September](#)

5, 2025

[Boyd Camak](#)[blog backup to](#)[date](#)[9.5.25_compre](#)[ssed \(1\)](#)[September 5,](#)[2025](#)[PDF of early](#)[blog posts...](#)[from](#)[backup files](#)[September 5,](#)[2025](#)[These intrusive](#)[sports betting](#)[sites ads on](#)[Spotify are](#)[legalized crime.](#)[September 5,](#)[2025](#)[\(no title\)](#)[September 5,](#)[2025](#)[Stigma is not](#)[changed](#)[directly:](#)[“Change your](#)[opinion about](#)[X.” It probably](#)[has to be](#)[changed by a](#)[life disruption](#)

Facing Reality (Cleaned Transcript)

I just had a couple of thoughts — not sure if they're coherent — but here goes.

True seekers can smell a rat. Something drives them to seek, and I don't think you can ever stop being a seeker once you are one. In some sense, we're all seekers — we just seek in different ways.

At the core of reality, life is extremely painful. It's difficult, disorienting. And I think that's why, with no disrespect to other traditions, the two figures who draw the deepest attention are Jesus and the Buddha. Because both of them looked reality in the eye. They didn't sell programs. They didn't offer five steps to happiness.

I know just enough Buddhism to be dangerous, but as I understand it, the Buddha said that all life is *dukkha* — often translated as suffering, but it's more like “unsatisfactoriness.” You buy

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[comprehensive shift in perception.](#)
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[hot take: The enemy is delighted that I spend most of my time thinking about the implications](#)

You move on to the next thing. That's *dukkha*.

Wounded seekers are drawn to that kind of honesty.

Now, one of my big beefs is that Christianity — or at least what passes for it — isn't dealing with reality. It's not dealing with the root of the human condition. Jesus did. But most of what's called Christianity today doesn't.

The purpose of theology should be to preserve the mystery. There's a paradox at the heart of the Christian way — good news that describes what it means to be human. It teaches how to live without being intimidated, how to have peace and joy even in pain. But most of us aren't even trying. Churches have agendas, but they're not teaching how to be human.

Here's what I think: once you've been "crucified" enough times — existentially, spiritually, racially, whatever — you realize how fragile you are. My suffering is linked to Christ's suffering. Scripture says we "complete the sufferings of Christ." That means our pain is part of the world's redemption. The more life

of my *ideas	throws at us, the closer we come to	
Boyd Camak love* rather than the implications of God's love itself. August 15, 2025 hot take: why can't we just say "God loves you," and leave it at that? August 15, 2025 hot take: most theology is demonic. August 15, 2025 WTF? (cf. The Apostle Paul) August 13, 2025 Change How You See the World (For the Better) LITTLE BY LITTLE Fr Columba Jordan CFR August 12, 2025 from a theological dialogue with a	And I'm not talking about spiritual bypassing. I'm saying that the only thing Christianity truly has to offer is a dead man on a tree. That's the mystery. We don't have answers; we have a cross. Something happened 2,000 years ago — people began worshiping a man executed by the state, egged on by religion. That doesn't happen. People don't normally worship executed criminals. But something in that event revealed the truth of reality. Following Jesus was hard as hell — and still is — but it's better than delusion. Because once you see the world through that lens, you realize there's nothing anyone can do to you anymore. You're free inside. That's what the cross means: <i>internal</i> <i>freedom</i>. And yet most churches have no clue. It's all touchy-feely, Hallmark stuff — "Follow our program and you'll be happy." No. You won't. Life's a bitch, and then you die. Happiness is fleeting. Joy isn't. Joy can coexist with pain. That's the paradox: the cross is the answer to being human. It makes no	Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa

fellow	sense — and that’s the point.	
Boyd Camak	Blog at WordPress.com. Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Informa	
August 12, 2025	I don’t care about church growth or institutional Christianity. What I care about is that people are drowning.	
Breaking False Peace:	Existentially drowning. We’re all miserable, and the ones who know it are actually blessed — “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” The poor understand reality. The rich are so intoxicated by comfort that they can’t even see their misery.	
Camak’s Confrontational Non-Violence		
August 12, 2025		
(no title) August 11, 2025		
nugget from a draft I’m working on:	I’m not saying this to bash the Church — community and sacraments matter — but most churches aren’t teaching transformation. They’re not teaching how to follow Jesus into peace.	
Radical contentment:	Christianity has become marketable, sanitized, and industrialized. But real Christianity is embarrassing. We worship a crucified God. That’s absurd — and that’s exactly what makes it real.	
God will provide. And if not, He is crucified with us, and we with Him.		
August 11, 2025		
If we’re going to focus on something irrelevant to the gospel, I think that we could come up with something better than western civilizat	A dead man on a tree is the answer to how to be human. That’s the paradox Paul wrote about. If we’re not wrestling with that, we’re just playing games.	
	I’m not claiming to have it all figured out. I’m a hypocrite, full of ignorance. But if we’re not grappling with the cross, we’ve missed the point entirely. People are hurting. People are drowning. And the paradox of the cross — that’s the lifeline.	

[ion. August 11,](#)

That's how to be human, to have

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[for a young
person in pain](#)August 10,
2025[broken vessel
dad](#) August 10,
2025[zine 1.0](#)[+ ebook
\(both free\)](#)August 10,
2025[\(no title\)](#) August
10, 2025[Burned by
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Luke 12:32–40](#)August 9, 2025
[pulling together
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one-liners I](#)[pulled from
the archives](#)August 8, 2025
[\(no title\)](#) August
7, 2025[Don't be afraid
to fire your
doctors,](#)

not to be pushed around. That's why
early Christians couldn't be controlled
— they were free.

So yeah — the “dead man on a tree.”
It's irrational, it's absurd, but it's the
truth that sets you free.

If we're not talking about that, if we're
not living in that paradox — then we're
just another business.

Face reality. Live in the tension. That's
the way to be human. Jesus made a
way — a way to be human, to respond
to reality. And I think that's the
conversation we need to start having
again.

Would you like me to make this **sound
like a written essay or blog post**
(slightly more structured paragraphs, a
few transitions) or **keep it as spoken-
word / monologue style** (raw, like an
edited transcript)?

| Tagged [bible](#), [christianity](#), [faith](#), [god](#), [jesus](#) | [Leave
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[therapists, and](#)**Boyd Camak**

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[Trust your gut.](#)[August 7, 2025](#)[Hell is the](#)[Pathway](#)[to Heaven](#)[August 7, 2025](#)[Discerning the](#)[Right](#)[University: An](#)[Issue-](#)[Spotting Frame](#)[work August 6,](#)[2025](#)[The Naked](#)[Gospel: A](#)[Manifesto of](#)[the Soul August](#)[5, 2025](#)[Discuss what](#)[these sources](#)[say about Core](#)[Theological](#)[Concepts, in](#)[the larger](#)[context of Boyd](#)[Camak's](#)[Spiritual](#)[Journey](#) [& Theology.](#)[August 5, 2025](#)[What is](#)[the gospel?](#)[August 5, 2025](#)[podcast:](#)[Beyond Perfect:](#)

Facing Reality.m4a

[Edit](#)

Posted on [October 8, 2025](#) by [Boyd Camak](#),
[hypocrite with logs in my eyes. \(Matthew 7:3-5\)](#)
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Choose Joy???

[Edit](#)

Posted on [October 7, 2025](#) by [Boyd Camak](#),
[hypocrite with logs in my eyes. \(Matthew 7:3-5\)](#)
[Admiring the counterintuitive way. \(1 Corinthians](#)
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The provided source offers a critical examination of the widely used Christian phrase “**choose joy**,” arguing that it represents a counterfeit or half-truth that is ultimately delusional. The author contends that joy is not an active choice but rather a **gift or a fruit of the spirit** that is received through a deep surrender to Christ. Specifically, the text asserts that the correct way to cope with suffering is to **unite one's pain to**

[Forging](#)

Christ's suffering and the meaning

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[in](#)[Life's Crucible](#)

August 4, 2025

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[From Strategies to Surrender: A Spiritual Journey](#)[Beyond Self-](#)[Help](#) August 4, 2025[Calling Off the Cavalry](#)

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[The Trinity and the Surrender of Burdens](#)

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the ultimate “life ring” for those who are spiritually “drowning.” The author criticizes many Christian churches for failing to teach this profound truth, instead promoting simpler, ineffectual remedies like “choosing joy.” This emphasis on the cross, which appears foolish to the world, is presented as the essential wisdom needed to counter the lies and emptiness of worldly solutions.

I want to just take a quick minute to talk about this idea of ‘choose joy,’ ‘choose joy.’

I heard this phrase today in the context of a conversation with a very sincere and very devout Christian and one who certainly does a lot more practical service than I ever have but they use this phrase “choose joy” and you know to each his own but for my money choosing joy is like a drowning man choosing not drowning.

For me if I’m going to choose joy that means I’m going to choose grabbing onto the life ring of Christ and my understanding of the scripture is that joy is something we receive not something we choose it’s one of the fruits of the spirit love joy peace patience kindness generalness self-

Meta

control and it's a mystery and it can

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works is that I unite myself to Christ I unite my suffering to Christ's suffering which gives it meaning and which gives it metaphysical psychological camaraderie and ultimately resurrection that's my understanding of how to cope with being human at the fundamental level and I think that it really pisses me off that most Christian churches don't teach this they teach other things so they teach half truth or whatever and that's why so many serious seekers don't even take Christianity seriously at least where I live and in the United States because the stuff we're selling is a counterfeit and the fact that we're actually selling it makes it even worse because we have to be sharing truth freely so anyway choose joy to me that sounds like wishful thinking like a desperate attempt to to cope with the human condition but it's ultimately delusional like every other thing other than Christ other than Christ and his cross and we need to be teaching this we need to be living this not because we're you know good people but because we're drowning we're drowning and the life ring is Christ's cross his crucifixion which shows the emptiness of the world's solutions and the wisdom of Christ the wisdom of God which is expressed in a way that appears foolish to the world Saint Paul talks

Archives

about that and for my money you can't

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exposes the world's lies and if we're if we're trying to follow Christ and we're trying to choose joy that means we haven't been instructed correctly on how to follow Christ and maybe that's a egomaniac statement to make but that's how I see it based on my experience and again we don't choose joy we receive joy and we receive joy by surrendering our entire life to Christ just like we grab completely under the life ring

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These people [Edit](#)
(and many
others) have
helped me on
the journey.

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Philosophi cal and Existential Influences

Søren Kierkegaard

Area of Influence: Existentialism,**Boyd Camak**

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(see appendix below on rejection of leap of faith concept)

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak aligns with Kierkegaard's emphasis on "personal experience over intellectual constructs". He also adopts Kierkegaard's critique of "Christendom" by rejecting the "conflating or confusing Christ's Kingdom with Western Civilization, or with America". He notes the difference between the "genius dazzles. But the apostle transmits," a concept attributed to Kierkegaard.

About Kierkegaard: Søren

Kierkegaard (1813-1855) was a Danish philosopher and theologian, widely considered the father of existentialism. Writing against the backdrop of Danish state Christianity and Hegelian philosophy, Kierkegaard argued that authentic faith requires individual, passionate commitment rather than rational certainty or cultural conformity. His concept of the "leap of faith" suggests that true religious belief transcends reason and requires personal risk. He distinguished between the objective uncertainty of faith and the subjective passion with which it must be held. Kierkegaard's critique of "Christendom"—the

institutional religion had domesticated the radical demands of following Christ. His pseudonymous works explored different life orientations (aesthetic, ethical, religious), ultimately arguing that the highest mode of existence involves standing alone before God in fear and trembling.

Lev Shestov

Area of Influence: Anti-Philosophy, Radical Experiential Faith, Despair

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak echoes Shestov's view, focusing on "less intellectualism more on experience :)". He resonated with Shestov's imagery contrasting worldly success (the well-lit road) with the spiritual journey (the unlit road), noting that the pivot (spiritual path) points toward "a divine logic that is not built on visibility, success, or clarity".

About Shestov: Lev Shestov (1866-1938) was a Russian existentialist philosopher who radically rejected rationalism and systematic philosophy in favor of faith grounded in desperation and lived experience. Influenced by Dostoevsky and Nietzsche, Shestov argued that

fundamental freedom and mystery at the heart of existence. He believed that Greek philosophy's emphasis on reason had corrupted Biblical faith, which he saw as rooted in the absurd and impossible. For Shestov, authentic faith begins not in intellectual certainty but in existential crisis—Job's suffering, Abraham's terror—where reason fails and only a leap beyond logic can sustain the soul. His works, including "Athens and Jerusalem," champion the Biblical God of miracles and impossibility over the Greek philosophers' God of necessity and rational order. Shestov's thought represents an extreme form of religious existentialism that prioritizes divine freedom and human desperation over philosophical coherence.

Rudolf Bultmann

Area of Influence: Demythologization

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Bultmann helped Camak to "read the Gospels and set aside questions of the supernatural" and clear away constructs. Camak's goal of "clearing away, a setting aside of the

this process.

About Bultmann: Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976) was a German Lutheran theologian and New Testament scholar who developed the controversial method of “demythologization.” Working within the framework of form criticism and influenced by existentialist philosophy (particularly Heidegger), Bultmann argued that the New Testament is filled with mythological elements—virgin birth, miracles, resurrection as physical reanimation—that reflect the ancient worldview but obscure the kerygma (the essential proclamation) for modern readers. His project sought to interpret these myths existentially, translating them into terms meaningful for contemporary existence. For Bultmann, the core message of Christianity concerns the call to authentic existence through faith in God’s action in Christ, not adherence to pre-scientific cosmology. While deeply controversial among conservatives who saw him as undermining Scripture’s authority, Bultmann believed he was preserving Christianity’s relevance by distinguishing its eternal existential truth from its temporary cultural packaging. His approach dominated German Protestant theology in the

mid-20th century and profoundly

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reads biblical texts.

Theological and Mystical Influences

Henri Nouwen

Area of Influence: Wounds and
Vulnerability, Divine Love, Community

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Nouwen's teaching on
achievements not providing lasting
glory resonated with Camak. Camak
utilizes Nouwen's concept of falling
"below the line" of conventional
success, asserting that this area "is
actually what's meaningful" and "the
gateway into something that really
matters".

About Nouwen: Henri Nouwen (1932-
1996) was a Dutch Catholic priest,
psychologist, and prolific spiritual writer
whose work bridged academic
theology and accessible spirituality.
After teaching at prestigious

institutions including Notre Dame,

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radical choice to leave academia and spend his final years serving people with developmental disabilities at the L'Arche Daybreak community in Canada. His theology centers on the “wounded healer” concept—the idea that our brokenness, when embraced rather than hidden, becomes the source of our ability to minister to others. Nouwen wrote vulnerably about his own struggles with loneliness, insecurity, and the need for affirmation, arguing that spiritual maturity involves moving from self-rejection to self-acceptance in God’s love. His most famous works, including “The Wounded Healer,” “Life of the Beloved,” and “The Return of the Prodigal Son,” emphasize downward mobility, vulnerability, and finding one’s belovedness in God rather than achievement. Nouwen’s deeply personal writing style and willingness to share his own psychological and spiritual struggles made profound theology accessible to ordinary readers.

Rowan Williams

Area of Influence: Suffering Theology,**Boyd Camak**

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Victory

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Williams' thought informs Camak's understanding of suffering. Camak cites the idea that God does not solve suffering externally, but "The way God works seems to be in the heart of it all, and through people". He also referenced Williams on the resurrection as the "re-making of creation itself".

About Rowan Williams: Rowan Williams (b. 1950) is a Welsh Anglican theologian, poet, and translator who served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 to 2012. Widely regarded as one of the most intellectually sophisticated theologians in the English-speaking world, Williams combines patristic scholarship, Russian Orthodox thought, and contemporary philosophy in his work. His theology emphasizes God's presence not as an external problem-solver but as one who enters fully into human suffering and transforms it from within. Williams draws heavily on the Eastern Christian tradition, particularly figures like Dostoevsky and the desert fathers, to articulate a vision of salvation as participation in Christ's death and resurrection rather than merely moral improvement or afterlife

insurance. His understanding of the

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survival but the cosmic renewal of all creation. Williams writes about contemplation, silence, and the apophatic (negative) tradition, arguing that authentic theology must acknowledge the limits of language before God's mystery. His work during his tenure as Archbishop navigating complex issues like sexuality in the Anglican Communion demonstrated his commitment to maintaining unity while engaging difficult questions with theological depth.

Thomas Hopko (Orthodox)

Area of Influence: Co-Crucifixion,
Rejection of Conventional Wisdom

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Hopko's maxims helped Camak learn not to dwell on evil. His influence underpins Camak's assertion that the "deeper the knowledge, the deeper the suffering", and that embracing the cross is the path away from "conventional wisdom".

About Hopko: Thomas Hopko (1939-2015) was an influential Orthodox Christian priest, theologian, and

into a Carpatho-Russian Orthodox family, Hopko became one of the most articulate voices for Orthodox Christianity in America, making complex Eastern Christian theology accessible to Western audiences. His teaching emphasized theosis (divinization), the centrality of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, and the transformative power of liturgical life. Hopko's famous "55 Maxims" offered concise spiritual wisdom drawn from Orthodox tradition, including advice like "Be awake" and "Do not complain, mumble, murmur or whine." His approach to theology stressed that true knowledge of God comes not through abstract speculation but through participation in Christ's paschal mystery—his death and resurrection. Hopko taught that the Christian life involves being "co-crucified" with Christ, embracing suffering as the pathway to transformation rather than something to be avoided or explained away. His podcasts, particularly "Speaking the Truth in Love," brought Orthodox spirituality to a broad audience, emphasizing practical holiness over intellectual systems.

Karl Rahner (Catholic)

Area of Influence: Broadening
Theological Definitions, Anonymous
Christian

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Rahner helped Camak “see the words that were used in my theological formation... to give me a broader definition of what those words were”. Camak frames his own view with Rahner’s concept: “if Christ is truth with a capital T, if you’re pursuing the truth, you’re pursuing Christ whether you know it or not”.

About Rahner: Karl Rahner (1904-1984) was a German Jesuit priest and one of the most influential Catholic theologians of the 20th century, playing a key role in the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Rahner’s theology sought to articulate Christian doctrine in terms meaningful to modern experience while remaining rooted in Catholic tradition. His concept of the “anonymous Christian” proved particularly controversial yet influential: Rahner argued that anyone authentically pursuing truth, love, and goodness is implicitly responding to God’s grace, even without explicit Christian belief. This reflected his

conviction that God's salvific will is

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throughout all human experience, not just within institutional religion. Rahner developed a “transcendental Thomism” that combined Aquinas’s scholastic theology with modern phenomenology and existentialism, arguing that human existence itself is oriented toward the “holy mystery” of God. His dense, philosophical style challenged readers but profoundly shaped how progressive Catholicism understands the relationship between nature and grace, the church and the world, explicit faith and implicit encounter with the divine. Rahner’s expansive theological vision provided intellectual foundation for Vatican II’s more open engagement with modernity and other religious traditions.

Louis Evely (Catholic Priest)

Area of Influence: Accessible
Language, Raw Spiritual Truth

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Evely’s influence is evident in Camak’s raw, colloquial style, making profound truths accessible.

Camak mentioned Evelyn reflecting on

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style parallels Camak's preference for raw honesty, exemplified by statements like "God has burned the hell out of me over and over and over with different really hard crosses and experiences".

About Evelyn: Louis Evelyn (1910-1985) was a Belgian Catholic priest and spiritual writer known for his direct, conversational style that made profound theological insights accessible to ordinary readers. Unlike academic theologians who wrote in formal, technical language, Evelyn communicated spiritual truths in everyday speech, often with striking metaphors and uncomfortably honest observations about faith, suffering, and human nature. His works, including "That Man Is You" and "Suffering," addressed difficult questions about God's presence in pain, the reality of evil, and the challenges of authentic Christian living without resorting to pious platitudes or theological abstractions. Evelyn's approach was deeply pastoral, shaped by his work with ordinary believers rather than academic colleagues. He emphasized personal encounter with God over adherence to religious systems, and he wasn't afraid to challenge conventional religious assumptions or express the raw emotions involved in

faith struggles. His willingness to

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God, and the messiness of spiritual life anticipated later movements toward vulnerable, authentic spirituality.

Though less well-known than some theological giants, Evely's influence persists among those who value honest, accessible spiritual writing that doesn't sanitize the difficulties of faith.

Alexander Schmemmann (Orthodox)

Area of Influence: Christianity as the End of Religion

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Schmemmann's radical perspective is a cornerstone of Camak's critique of institutional faith. Camak states, "the conservative Eastern Orthodox priest Alexander Schmemmann put it even stronger saying that Christianity is the end of all religion."

About Schmemmann: Alexander Schmemmann (1921-1983) was a Russian Orthodox priest, theologian, and longtime dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New

York. Born in Estonia and educated in

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Schmemmann became the most influential Orthodox voice in 20th-century America, shaping how both Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians understand liturgy, sacrament, and the relationship between Christianity and culture. His provocative claim that “Christianity is the end of religion” meant that Christ doesn’t offer another religious system of rituals and rules to manage the sacred/secular divide, but rather abolishes that very distinction by revealing all of creation as sacramental—capable of manifesting God’s presence. Schmemmann argued that religion, as humanity’s attempt to reach God through prescribed practices, is transcended by Christianity’s revelation of God reaching toward humanity in incarnation. His liturgical theology emphasized that the Eucharist is not merely a ritual but the church’s essential act—a foretaste of the kingdom and the transformation of all reality. Works like “For the Life of the World” and “The Eucharist” articulated a vision of Christianity as cosmic and world-affirming rather than world-denying, challenging both secularism and conventional religiosity. Schmemmann’s thought continues to influence discussions about authentic worship, the meaning of sacrament, and Christianity’s cultural engagement.

Liberation and Moral Authority Influences

Howard Thurman

Area of Influence: Spiritual Basis for
Social Activism, Internal Freedom

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Thurman's work aligns with
Camak's conviction that true faith
unmasks systemic injustice and stands
with the oppressed. Camak draws on
Thurman's concepts of internal
freedom in the face of suffering.

About Thurman: Howard Thurman
(1899-1981) was an African American
theologian, mystic, and civil rights
leader whose profound spiritual vision
influenced figures including Martin
Luther King Jr. Born in Florida during
segregation, Thurman became one of
the first Black students at Rochester
Theological Seminary and later served
as dean of Marsh Chapel at Boston
University. His most famous work,

“Jesus and the Disinherited,” argued

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fundamentally addressed to the oppressed and marginalized, offering a spiritual foundation for resistance against dehumanization. Thurman distinguished between the religion of Jesus (liberation, dignity, beloved community) and the religion about Jesus (often used to justify oppression and maintain hierarchies). He taught that true spirituality cultivates an inner freedom that external circumstances cannot destroy—what he called “the sound of the genuine” within each person. Thurman’s mystical approach to Christianity emphasized direct experience of God’s presence and the unity of all humanity beyond racial and religious divisions. He co-founded one of America’s first intentionally interracial churches and traveled to India to meet Gandhi, bringing contemplative depth to social activism. His spirituality offered a profound alternative to both shallow activism and escapist religion, insisting that interior transformation and justice work are inseparable.

James Cone

Area of Influence: Black Liberation Theology, Crucifixion as Lynching

Quotation / Context Showing**Boyd Camak**

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language of Liberation Theology to describe Christ's death as an execution "egged on by religion". He uses stark analogies like the cross being a "lynching tree" or an "electric chair".

About Cone: James Cone (1938-2018) was an American theologian who founded Black Liberation Theology, radically reorienting Christian theology around the experience of Black oppression and resistance. His groundbreaking work "Black Theology and Black Power" (1969) argued that any theology not addressing racism and working toward Black liberation is heretical, regardless of its doctrinal orthodoxy. Cone insisted that God takes sides—specifically with the oppressed—and that Jesus's ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection must be understood in political terms as God's identification with the marginalized and God's judgment against oppressive systems. In "The Cross and the Lynching Tree," Cone drew explicit parallels between Christ's crucifixion and the lynching of Black Americans, arguing that the cross reveals God's solidarity with victims of racist violence. This provocative theological move challenged comfortable Christianity by insisting that the gospel has

is complicity. Cone's work profoundly influenced liberation theologies globally and challenged predominantly white American theology to reckon with how racism has shaped Christian doctrine, practice, and institutional structures. His uncompromising insistence that theology must serve liberation or betray the gospel continues to challenge Christians toward radical solidarity with the oppressed.

Martin Luther

Area of Influence: Radical Reform, Distrust of Religious Authority

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak's sharp critique of institutional corruption and focus on Christ as the path to freedom resonates with Luther's reformatory spirit. This is evident in Camak's insistence on the "simplicity of the gospel" over complex dogma.

About Luther: Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a German monk, theologian, and professor whose protest against Catholic Church abuses sparked the Protestant Reformation, permanently fracturing

Western Christianity. Luther's

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his study of Romans, where he concluded that salvation comes through faith alone (*sola fide*), by grace alone (*sola gratia*), as revealed in Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*)—not through the church's sacramental system, priestly mediation, or purchased indulgences. His 95 Theses (1517), originally an academic challenge to the indulgence system, ignited a movement that questioned papal authority, clerical privilege, and the entire medieval religious economy. Luther translated the Bible into German, making Scripture accessible to ordinary people and bypassing clerical gatekeepers. His theology emphasized the "priesthood of all believers," direct access to God through Christ, and the Christian's paradoxical status as "simultaneously saint and sinner." Luther's fierce rhetoric against religious corruption, his insistence that conscience bound to God's word cannot be coerced, and his skepticism toward human religious institutions established patterns that continue in Protestant Christianity. However, Luther's legacy is complex—his later anti-Jewish writings and his sometimes conservative social positions complicate his image as a liberator. Nevertheless, his core insight that the gospel's simplicity had been buried under institutional complexity

St. Paul (Apostle)

Area of Influence: Holy Foolishness, Cruciformity (1 Cor. 1:18-25)

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak's tagline itself is a continuous citation: "Admiring the counterintuitive way. (1 Corinthians 1:18-25)". He embraces the core Pauline insight that "God's power is revealed in weakness, not domination". This leads to the idea that "Once we get that we are co-crucified with Christ, there's nothing the SOBs can do against us anymore."

About St. Paul: St. Paul (c. 5-67 CE), originally Saul of Tarsus, was a Pharisee who persecuted early Christians until a dramatic conversion experience on the road to Damascus transformed him into Christianity's most influential early missionary and theologian. His letters, which constitute much of the New Testament, established key Christian theological frameworks including justification by faith, the cosmic significance of Christ's death and resurrection, and

radical reversal of values inherent in the gospel: God's power is manifest in weakness, wisdom appears as foolishness, and the crucified Christ—a skandalon (scandal/stumbling block) to both Jews and Greeks—reveals God's true nature. His teaching on being “crucified with Christ” introduced the concept of cruciformity—that Christian existence means conforming one's life to the pattern of Christ's death and resurrection, dying to self and rising to new life. Paul's letters addressed practical issues in early Christian communities while articulating profound theological insights about grace, law, freedom, suffering, and glory. His missionary work established Christianity as a movement transcending ethnic boundaries, though his views on gender, slavery, and social hierarchy remain contested. Paul's profound influence on Christian theology, his emphasis on faith over works, and his paradoxical theology of strength-in-weakness continue to shape Christianity globally.

Spiritual and

Models

St. Joseph

Area of Influence: Masculine

Strength, Vocation, Quiet Faithfulness

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak looks to St. Joseph as a model of fatherhood who was “attuned to the Holy Spirit”. St. Joseph models “how to use masculine strength in a holy way, not to brag, but to protect others”. Camak strives to emulate Joseph’s surrender when facing unemployment and family obligations.

About St. Joseph: St. Joseph, the husband of Mary and earthly father of Jesus, appears in the Gospels primarily in Matthew and Luke’s infancy narratives. Described as a “righteous man,” Joseph receives divine guidance through dreams, protects his family from Herod’s violence by fleeing to Egypt, and provides for Jesus during his formative years. Despite his crucial role in salvation history, Joseph never speaks in Scripture—his obedience is expressed entirely through action. This silent strength has made Joseph the

Christian interpretation emphasizes Joseph's protection of Mary's virginity while still serving as Jesus's legal father, giving Christ his Davidic lineage and social legitimacy. Joseph represents masculine virtue expressed not through domination or self-assertion but through humble service, attentive listening to God, and sacrificial protection of the vulnerable. In Catholic tradition, devotion to St. Joseph grew significantly in the 19th and 20th centuries, with Pope Pius IX declaring him patron of the universal church. Contemporary spirituality increasingly views Joseph as a model of authentic masculinity—strong yet gentle, authoritative yet humble, decisive yet receptive to divine guidance. His willingness to embrace a vocation he didn't choose and to serve a mission greater than himself offers a powerful alternative to cultural models of masculine success.

Desert Fathers

Area of Influence: Authentic Monasticism, Going Deeper into the Kingdom

Quotation / Context Showing Influence: Camak seeks to translate

the wisdom of the Desert Fathers—

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into a contemporary form that doesn't require being a "church nerd". He compares their context to his own: "we need Desert Fathers-type writing for our context".

About the Desert Fathers: The

Desert Fathers (and Mothers) were Christian hermits, ascetics, and monks who retreated to the Egyptian desert beginning in the 3rd century CE, seeking radical discipleship away from an increasingly institutionalized and culturally comfortable Christianity. Figures like Anthony of Egypt, Pachomius, and Macarius the Great established patterns of monastic life that would shape Christian spirituality for centuries. After Constantine's legalization of Christianity made martyrdom unlikely and cultural Christianity common, these desert dwellers sought a "white martyrdom"—death to self through ascetic discipline rather than physical death. Their wisdom, preserved in collections like "The Sayings of the Desert Fathers," emphasizes inner transformation over external religious performance, spiritual warfare against demonic thoughts (logismoi), the purification of the heart, and direct experiential knowledge of God. The Desert Fathers practiced radical hospitality, silence, manual labor, constant prayer, and

stories—often featuring surprising reversals, paradoxes, and challenges to religious pretension—prioritize humility and self-knowledge over theological sophistication. The desert tradition influenced both Eastern Orthodox hesychasm (stillness) and Western monasticism through figures like John Cassian and Benedict. Contemporary interest in the Desert Fathers reflects hunger for authentic, non-consumerist spirituality that addresses the depths of human consciousness rather than merely managing behavior.

Buddhist Teachers (Mindfulness, Pema Chödrön)

Area of Influence: Mindfulness, Confrontation of Suffering, Psychology

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak explored Buddhism intensively, referencing concepts like impermanence and the “monkey

mind". He notes alignment with the

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from "direct engagement with suffering rather than avoidance".

About Buddhist Teachers and Pema

Chödrön: Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) in the 6th century BCE, offers a path of liberation from suffering (dukkha) through understanding impermanence (anicca), non-self (anatta), and the causes of suffering articulated in the Four Noble Truths. Buddhist practice emphasizes mindfulness—non-judgmental present-moment awareness—as a tool for observing the mind's habits and reducing reactive suffering. Rather than providing theological answers to suffering's existence, Buddhism teaches practical methods for relating differently to inevitable pain. Pema Chödrön (b. 1936), an American Tibetan Buddhist nun and teacher, has become one of the most accessible voices in Western Buddhism. Her works, including "When Things Fall Apart" and "The Places That Scare You," blend traditional Buddhist teachings with contemporary psychology and address anxiety, fear, and life's difficulties with remarkable directness. Chödrön emphasizes "staying with" uncomfortable experiences rather than seeking escape, cultivating compassion for oneself and others, and recognizing

solve. Her teaching style—warm, humorous, and psychologically sophisticated—resonates with Western audiences seeking practical wisdom for navigating modern life’s complexities. The Buddhist emphasis on direct experience over dogma, on observing mental patterns rather than merely believing doctrines, and on compassion as the fruit of wisdom has influenced contemporary Christian contemplative practice and trauma-informed spirituality.

Abraham

Area of Influence: Experiential Faith

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Abraham is cited as the prototype for prioritizing action and personal relationship over abstract knowledge. Camak views Abraham’s actions as aligning with the existential mandate: “...father Abraham and Jesus for the win—experience over intellectual constructs”.

About Abraham: Abraham (traditionally dated c. 2000 BCE, though historicity is debated) is the foundational patriarch of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, making him

(Genesis 12-25), Abraham responds to God's call to leave his homeland for an unknown destination, trusting a promise of descendants despite his advanced age and Sarah's barrenness. His story emphasizes faith as trust in God's promises despite apparent impossibilities—Sarah's pregnancy in old age, the command to sacrifice Isaac followed by divine provision of an alternative. The binding of Isaac (the Akedah) represents the ultimate test: Abraham's willingness to obey God even when the command contradicts both natural affection and God's own promises. Jewish tradition emphasizes Abraham's righteousness and his role as founder of the covenant people. Christianity, particularly Paul's theology, presents Abraham as the prototype of justification by faith rather than works—he "believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness" (Romans 4:3). Islam honors Abraham (Ibrahim) as a prophet and paradigm of pure monotheism who rebuilt the Kaaba. Existentialist thinkers like Kierkegaard interpret Abraham's story as illustrating faith's movement beyond ethical reasoning into paradox and personal relationship with God. Abraham's significance across religious traditions lies not in theological sophistication but in radical trust—moving forward on God's word

despite uncertainty, fear, and the

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Marsha Linehan's DBT

Area of Influence: Therapeutic Practices, Trauma-Informed Consciousness

Quotation / Context Showing

Influence: Camak uses DBT/mindfulness to address how “nervous systems, trauma responses, and embodied practices shape consciousness, not just ideas changing”. His own practice of praying the rosary while running serves as an “embodied practice” for psychological grounding and integration.

About Marsha Linehan and DBT:

Marsha Linehan (b. 1943) is an American psychologist who developed Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), originally for treating individuals with borderline personality disorder and chronic suicidality. Linehan's approach combines cognitive-behavioral techniques with mindfulness practices drawn from Zen Buddhism, emphasizing the dialectic (balance) between acceptance and change. DBT teaches skills in four key areas:

mindfulness (present-moment

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(surviving crises without making them worse), emotion regulation (understanding and managing intense feelings), and interpersonal effectiveness (navigating relationships). Linehan's personal history—which she publicly revealed in 2011—adds profound depth to her work: she herself struggled with severe mental illness, self-harm, and psychiatric hospitalization as a young woman. Her recovery, partly through spiritual practice and radical acceptance, informed her conviction that people can build lives worth living even from places of extreme suffering. DBT's emphasis on validation—acknowledging that responses make sense given someone's history and biology—combined with skills for change, has proven effective for trauma survivors, addiction, eating disorders, and other conditions involving emotional dysregulation. The therapy's recognition that change happens not just cognitively but through embodied practice—literally rewiring nervous system responses through repeated behavioral patterns—aligns with contemporary neuroscience. DBT represents an integration of Eastern contemplative practice, Western behavioral science, and hard-won personal wisdom about suffering and transformation.

Appendix

Yes, Boyd Camak uses the concept of the “leap of faith,” but he explicitly rejects it as an adequate description of his own religious experience, preferring to define his faith as something rooted in visceral personal struggle and empirical evidence of God’s action.

Here is a comprehensive breakdown of how Camak engages with the “leap of faith” concept:

1. Direct Rejection of the Term

Camak repeatedly distances himself from the “leap of faith” label, particularly when the phrase implies a blind, intellectual decision made in the absence of evidence.

- He states directly that his faith is based on his own experience, “not a leap of faith”.
- When discussing his trust in God’s deliverance, he clarifies, “I have faith, not a leap, not a leap of faith, but I have faith

whatever he wants to deliver me out of”.

2. Redefining the Nature of Faith (The “Grasping”)

Camak contrasts the intellectual definition of the “leap of faith” with the reality of his own struggle. He rejects the idea that faith is a composed, supra-rational choice:

- He specifically denies that faith is “a leap of faith in the sense of a cold, calm, decision to suspend intellectual considerations in favor of a supra-rational posture”.
- Instead, he describes his path as “an existentially desperate grasping violent kicking and scratching and bloody and can’t figure it out and doing anything I can to grasp onto any shred of anything that can extract me from this hell”.

Philosophical and Theological Context

While rejecting the phrase for his own experience, Camak recognizes it as a central concept in the existentialist tradition that influences him:

- **Søren Kierkegaard:** The concept is explicitly attributed to Kierkegaard in a discussion comparing different theological focuses: “Kierkegaard (leap of faith), Shestov (despair)”.
- **Biblical Archetype:** He uses the term when discussing the biblical figure Abraham, noting that Abraham’s actions, such as his willingness to offer Isaac, reflect a reliance on personal relationship rather than rational understanding. This action “mirrors Kierkegaard’s concept of the ‘leap of faith,’ where belief transcends reason”.
- **Lev Shestov:** Camak also cites the existentialist thinker Lev Shestov, whose philosophy aligns with the idea that faith

must move beyond intellectual

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requires a “leap beyond reason” because true knowledge cannot be achieved through mere logic.

In summary, Camak’s faith, derived from intense personal experience, is an “existential grasping” rather than a clean philosophical “leap”. He prioritizes this lived experience and subsequent internal freedom over adherence to purely intellectual constructs.

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Here’s a pretty [Edit](#)
good list of
what helped
me. (Or as the
flattery bots
put it, “my
influences.””)



thought that Jesus was in here somewhere...]

Posted on [October 6, 2025](#) by [Boyd Camak](#),
[hypocrite with logs in my eyes. \(Matthew 7:3-5\)](#)
[Admiring the counterintuitive way. \(1 Corinthians 1:18-25\)](#)

Philosophical and Existential
Influences

Influence	Area of Influence	Quotation / Context Showing Influence
Søren Kierkegaard	Existentialism, Critique of Christianism, Leap	Camak aligns with Kierkegaard's emphasis on

(see **experienc**
appendix **e over**
below on **intellectu**
rejection **al**
of leap of **construct**
faith **s”**. He
concept) also
adopts
Kierkegaa
rd’s
critique of
“Christend
om” by
rejecting
the
“conflatin
g or
confusin

Kingdom

with

Western

Civilizatio

n, or with

America”

. He notes

the

difference

between

the

“genius

dazzles.

But the

apostle

transmits

,” a

concept

		to Kierkegaa rd.
Lev Shestov	Anti- Philosop hy, Radical Experient ial Faith, Despair	Camak echoes Shestov’s view, focusing on “less intellectu alism more on experien e :)”. He resonated with Shestov’s

contrastin
g worldly
success
(the well-
lit road)
with the
spiritual
journey
(the unlit
road),
noting that
the pivot
(spiritual
path)
points
toward “a
divine
logic that

		built on visibility, success, or clarity”.
Rudolf Bultmann	Demythol ogization	Bultmann helped Camak to “read the Gospels and set aside question s of the supernat ural” and clear

constructs
 . Camak’s
goal of
“clearing
away, a
setting
aside of
the
formulas
and the
theologie
s” to
focus on
the core
facts of
Christ is
linked to

		process.
--	--	----------

Theological and Mystical Influences

Influence	Area of Influence	Quotation / Context Showing Influence
Henri Nouwen	Wounds and Vulnerability, Divine Love, Community	Nouwen’s teaching on achievement, not providing lasting glory resonated with Camak.

utilizes

Nouwen’s

concept of

falling

“below

the line”

of

conventio

nal

success,

asserting

that this

area “is

actually

what’s

meaningf

ul” and

“the

		into somethin g that really matters”.
Rowan Williams	Suffering Theology, God’s Presence in Pain, Christ’s Victory	Williams’ thought informs Camak’s understan ding of suffering. Camak cites the idea that God does not solve

externally,

but “**The**

way God

works

seems to

be in the

heart of it

all, and

through

people”.

He also

reference

d Williams

on the

resurrecti

on as the

“re-

making

		creation itself”.
Thomas Hopko (Orthodo x)	Co- Crucifixio n, Rejection of Conventi onal Wisdom	Hopko’s maxims helped Camak learn not to dwell on evil. His influence underpins Camak’s assertion that the “deeper the

		e, the
		deeper
		the
		suffering
		”, and that
		embracing
		the cross
		is the path
		away from
		“conventi
		onal
		wisdom”.
Karl	Broadeni	Rahner
Rahner	ng	helped
(Catholic)	Theologi	Camak
	cal	“see the
	Definition	words

Anonymo used in
us my
Christian theologic
al
formation
... to give
me a
broader
definition
of what
those
words
were”.
Camak
frames his
own view
with
Rahner’s

		“if Christ is truth with a capital T, if you’re pursuing the truth, you’re pursuing Christ whether you know it or not”.
Louis Evely (Catholic Priest)	Accessibl e Languag e, Raw	Evely’s influence is evident in

Truth raw,
colloquial
style,
making
profound
truths
accessible
. Camak
mentioned
Evely
reflecting
on the
personal
quality of
evil.
Evely's
style
parallels

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preferenc

e for raw

honesty,

exemplifie

d by

statement

s like

“God has

burned

the hell

out of me

over and

over and

over with

different

really

hard

crosses

		experienc es”.
Alexande r Schmem ann (Orthodo x)	Christiani ty as the End of Religion	Schmema nn’s radical perspectiv e is a cornersto ne of Camak’s critique of institution al faith. Camak states, “the conserva

Eastern Orthodox priest Alexander Schmemmann put it even stronger saying that Christianity is the end of all religion."

Liberation and Moral Authority Influences

	Influence	/ Context
		Showing
		Influence
Howard Thurman	Spiritual Basis for Social Activism, Internal Freedom	Thurman' s work aligns with Camak's conviction that true faith unmasks systemic injustice and stands with the oppressed

		draws on Thurman’ s concepts of internal freedom in the face of suffering.
James Cone	Black Liberatio n Theology, Crucifixio n as Lynching	Camak adopts the visceral language of Liberation Theology to

Christ's
death as
an
execution
**"egged
on by
religion"**.
He uses
stark
analogies
like the
cross
being a
**"lynching
tree"** or
an
**"electric
chair"**.

Luther

Reform,

Distrust

of

Religious

Authority

sharp

critique of

institution

al

corruption

and focus

on Christ

as the

path to

freedom

resonates

with

Luther’s

reformer

y spirit.

This is

evident in

Camak’s

		on the “simplicit y of the gospel” over complex dogma.
St. Paul (Apostle)	Holy Foolishn ess, Crucifor mity (1 Cor. 1:18- 25)	Camak’s tagline itself is a continuou s citation: “Admirin g the counterin tuitive way. (1

ns 1:18-

25)”. He

embraces

the core

Pauline

insight

that

“God’s

power is

revealed

in

weaknes

s, not

dominati

on”. This

leads to

the idea

that

		get that
		we are
		co-
		crucified
		with
		Christ,
		there's
		nothing
		the SOBs
		can do
		against
		us
		anymore.
		”.

Spiritual and Personal Models

Influence	Area of Influence	Quotation / Context
-----------	--------------------------	----------------------------

		Influence
St. Joseph	Masculin e Strength, Vocation, Quiet Faithfuln ess	Camak looks to St. Joseph as a model of fatherhoo d who was “attuned to the Holy Spirit”. St. Joseph models “how to

masculin
e
strength
in a holy
way, not
to brag,
but to
protect
others”.
Camak
strives to
emulate
Joseph’s
surrender
when
facing
unemploy
ment and

		obligation s.
Desert Fathers	Authentic Monastici sm, Going Deeper into the Kingdom	Camak seeks to translate the wisdom of the Desert Fathers— who went “deeper into the gospel” —into a contempo rary form that

			require being a “church nerd”. He compares their context to his own: “we need Desert Fathers- type writing for our context”.
Buddhist Teachers	Mindfuln ess,	Camak explored	

ess,

ation of

intensively

Pema

Suffering,

;

Chödrön)

Psycholo

referencin

gy

g

concepts

like

imperman

ence and

the

“monkey

mind”.

He notes

alignment

with the

Buddhist

view that

true

wisdom

		from “direct engagem ent with suffering rather than avoidanc e”.
Abraham	Experient ial Faith	Abraham is cited as the prototype for prioritizing action and personal

p over

abstract

knowledg

e. Camak

views

Abraham’

s actions

as

aligning

with the

existential

mandate:

“...father

Abraham

and

Jesus for

the win—

experienc

		intellectu al construct s”.
Marsha Linehan’s DBT	Therapeu tic Practices , Trauma- Informed Consciou sness	Camak uses DBT/mind fulness to address how “nervous systems, trauma response s, and embodie d

shape

consciou

sness,

not just

ideas

changing

”. His own

practice of

praying

the rosary

while

running

serves as

an

“embodie

d

practice”

for

		ical
		grounding
		and
		integration
		.

Appendix:

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- **Lev Shestov:** Camak also

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Lev Shestov, whose philosophy aligns with the idea that faith must move beyond intellectual boundaries, positing that faith requires a “**leap beyond reason**” because true knowledge cannot be achieved through mere logic.

In summary, Camak’s faith, derived from intense personal experience, is an “**existential grasping**” rather than a clean philosophical “**leap**”. He prioritizes this lived experience and subsequent internal freedom over adherence to purely intellectual constructs.

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Posted on [October 6, 2025](#) by [Boyd Camak](#),
hypocrite with logs in my eyes. (Matthew 7:3-5,
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Jonah's rebellion & ...

Edit

Posted on [October 6, 2025](#) by [Boyd Camak](#),
[hypocrite with logs in my eyes. \(Matthew 7:3-5\)](#)
[Admiring the counterintuitive way. \(1 Corinthians](#)
[1:18-25\)](#)

[Reflections on Jonah & me/us](#)

[bible.usccb.org-Monday of the Twenty-](#)
[seventh Week in Ordinary Time](#)
[10.6.2025](#)

The text provides a personal reflection,

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readings, focusing on the **biblical story of Jonah** and the theological concept of **God using human disobedience for good**. The author initially discusses their struggle to complete a **Bible-in-a-year plan** and how the **Catholic lectionary** provides a manageable structure for daily scripture reading, acting as a personal **spiritual and psychological foundation**. The main theological point centers on how Jonah's decision to **flee his calling** ultimately led to the **conversion of the sailors** during the storm, demonstrating that God can transform mistakes and sin into positive outcomes. The reflection also touches upon the nature of biblical narratives, suggesting their value lies in the **wisdom and life lessons** they convey rather than strict factual accuracy, before concluding with a cautious note about **not misapplying this principle to justify evil or abuse**.

Well, I thought that I was going to take a break from these reflections for a couple of days, but here I am again, I was actually listening to the daily lectionary readings on the Catholic website, the US Catholic Bishops website, and as I give unsolicited advice to folks around the end of the year when folks like I have before

attempt to try to read the Bible in one

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the Bible in a year plan, I think I get to around late January or early February where I give up.

So several years ago I started reading the Catholic lectionary and the beautiful thing about the lectionary is it gives you a little bit of everything every day, it gives you an Old Testament, it gives you a Psalm, it gives you an Epistle, it gives you the Gospel, and there are a few exceptions to that, but it keeps me on track and a lot of times there are connections between the different sections of the Bible and often when I get up in the morning I might just read one or two lines of the first, one or two lines of the Psalm for the day and maybe try to go back and read the whole lectionary later and I don't do this out of piety or virtue, I do it because as I think I've written my blog before it gives me an anchor, it gives me, it kind of gets me on the right wavelength, it gives me a way to kind of, when I wake up, it kind of gives me a way to kind of settle my brain or gives me like a foundation or almost like a fortress, it kind of gets my brain in a place where I can take advantage of the posture, the kind of intellectual, spiritual, psychological foundation that Christ gives me, gives us so that I'm in a place where I can act with volition, that I'm not tossed about by waves of

the world, I have my feet fully planted

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that verse, I think that verse, I can take my stand against the devil's schemes but it's really almost a selfish act, I mean I kind of read the Psalms from a selfish act because I want to be able to be me, I want to be able to not be pushed around either by other people or even myself but I digress, I digress but speaking of being tossed around, today's lectionary day was about Jonah and the thing that struck me about this passage, I'll just lead with the punch line, God can use our mistakes, our disobedience, our refusal to do His will, He can turn that into a good thing, our God can use our ignorance and even our sin for good and when I say God can use our sin for good, I'm not going to get into some kind of debate, I'm sure there are plenty of counter examples and people can try to take that statement and use it as some kind of rhetorical hammer to pound me down but I'm not going to get into that, I'm just looking at the passage today about Jonah and what I noticed is that God told Jonah go preach against Nineveh and Jonah decided to ignore the Lord and get into a ship and sail away and run away from his calling and let me say here that as I've said before when it comes to these types of stories like as everybody knows or as folks who grew up in the Christian tradition know from

Sunday school class, from their

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was swallowed by great fish and when I just cut to the chase again, Jonah, God says go do this, go preach against Nineveh and Jonah says screw you Lord, I don't want to do that, I'm going to run away so he gets into the ship and sets sail with some other folks and then there's this great storm and everybody's freaking out on the ship because they think they're going to die and parenthetically, I think some of us get to a place in life sometimes where wanting to die or the prospect of death actually feels like good news rather than bad news, but I will stay away from that right now and I'm not going to get into that side note, that's a whole different thing, but anyway, so Jonah, he runs away and what I was going to say is that as I've said before these stories, it doesn't matter if the stories are actually factually true or not, it matters a little bit, but whether or not Jonah was swallowed by great fish or whether that was invented and there's other stories in the Bible, I personally think that these stories in the Bible all have some kind of factual basis, but either deliberately or over time, maybe the factual details got a little fuzzy, but what matters to me is that these stories were handed down over thousands of years, I guess it was thousands of years, but it's funny like for example, the story of the Israelites

settling the promised land, the

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necessarily match up directly with the way that the story reads in the Bible and I was talking with a Jewish therapist one time and they said, yeah, that's not the way we tell it, but this therapist didn't care.

I was kind of walking on eggshells a little bit saying, hey, archaeological evidence doesn't necessarily support the way that the Hebrew scriptures describe the settlement of the promised land and that therapist was like, it doesn't matter, they know that.

This is how we tell it though and this is how we celebrate this victory in our tradition and so the point is that these stories, they were handed down, but they were handed down not because they were to preserve every factual detail of some random thing, they were handed down because they taught a specific wisdom.

There was some wisdom and there were these stories and they contained life lessons that the folks thought was worth handing down over thousands of years.

I heard somebody say that they were like an early form of psychology but I actually think it was more than that.

I think that psychology, psychology of

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psychology, but I don't think they're equivalent, I don't think these stories are equivalent with psychology, I think they offer more than psychology or at least something in addition to psychology and I think the psychology and these stories complement each other and I don't think it matters how much they overlap, but anyway, so getting back to Jonah, so Jonah, he runs away, God says, go preach against Nineveh, Jonah says, no, I'm going to go and runs away and then what happens is everybody knows there's this great storm or as most people know, it doesn't matter if you don't know this if you're not familiar with the Christian tradition, but Jonah runs away, there's this great storm and everybody on the boat is freaking out and they're all praying to their god, whoever their god is, they're like, what can we do?

And then Jonah's asleep in the bottom, under the main part of the boat or whatever and then they wake Jonah up and they're like, what's going on?

Why are you not praying to your god?

Who are you?

And he says I'm a Hebrew, I worship the Lord and they're like, oh my gosh,

how can you do this to us?

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And so they pray and Jonah says, just throw me into the sea and they did, they threw Jonah into the sea and then the storm settles down and then the storm settles down and then they all worship the Lord, everybody on the boat worships the Lord. [Jonah's God. They all worship Jonah's God—as I read it.]

And so, you know, then of course the fish swallows Jonah up and the lectionary doesn't go past that.

Later he goes back to Nineveh and preaches, against Nineveh and you know, they repent and I think Jonah gets mad about that because he didn't like Nineveh, but I don't even, I may not be remembering that, right?

The lectionary doesn't go that far.

But my point is that the Lord used Jonah's unfaithfulness to actually do some good.

Those people on the ship, if I read this right, the people on the ship are, the people on the ship are, they are, they turn to the Lord. [Jonah's God.]

So even though Jonah was avoiding his, his responsibilities, you know, he ran off to these other people with these

other people to go on a ship and then,

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folks on the ship encountered the Lord and Jonah goes and does what he should have done in the first place.

So that's the kind of God we worship.

I think St. Paul talks about that, you know, like, you know, should we sin in order for grace to abound more and he says no.

But, you know, the point is that, you know, we worship a God who loves us and as I've said before, you know, you know, repentance is turning around and realizing that God has already forgiven us.

And I think I got that idea from Herb McCabe or from the Eclectic Orthodoxy website, you know, quoting Herb McCabe who is, who was a brilliant Dominican priest and thinker, scholar or whatever in the 20th century, he was actually, he did a lot of work with the philosophy of language in Wittgenstein, which is a fascinating field.

And, you know, you know, Wittgenstein, I won't get into the philosophy details or whatever, but anyway, the point is that we can, when we repent, not only are we discovering that we're already forgiven and we're

just appropriating that forgiveness, but

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can be used for good.

Now, I think there's a, there's a 20th century Anglican, Anglican scholar, I can't think of his name, but it starts with an A, I think. [Austin Farrer]

But anyway, there's this guy and he, he says, he has this idea that, you know, on this topic, gosh, what's his name? [Austin Farrer]

Anyway, he has this idea that, you know, he says, you know, do we, you know, does God, does God have the opportunity to make things even more good by us giving him sin?

And, and he says no.

But I think that others in the tradition may say yes.

And for me, that's one of those theological gymnastics questions that's fascinating to talk about, but really a distraction from the main issue, which is that the human condition is we're all in deep shit.

And the gospel is a life ring that we can grab onto to be saved.

Or even the jaws of life, as I've talked about, where Christ crashes into the

human condition to save us.

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And so the, the issue is, you know, the issue is, you know, not whether what we did to get in deep shit and what our human forefathers going back to Adam did to get in deep shit.

It's how do we get out of deep shit?

And so anyway, the way to do that is to grab the life ring.

And that's what Jonah finally did.

He finally turned around and go did what he's supposed to do.

And then, you know, there was great, there was a great good. (Those people on the ship, if I read this right, the people on the ship are, the people on the ship are, they are, they turn to the Lord. [Jonah's God.]

But the point is that, that, that, you know, we can, I guess that's another, another part of the joy of the gospel is that not only do we realize we're forgiven, but that God can use the harm that we did for a greater good.

Now, I want to be very careful here because there's a lot of shit that happens in this world.

There's a lot of abuse, a lot of neglect,

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And you know, I don't, I don't want to get into this debate about what they call theodicy, which is another stupid word that, that, that the people use in the theology world, like, you know, the, the, the idea of theodicy is like parlor game, you know, can we sit around and talk about, you know, how a good God, a good God can let evil exist.

And people have these endless debates about it.

And, you know, and, you know, personally, the best I've ever heard about it is a Jewish rabbi that I can't really, I can't do justice to his, to his perspective.

It was Jonathan Sacks.

And he said that for the Jewish people, you know, it wasn't really an issue.

It was like God, you know, created the world and it had some inherent instability or whatever.

And the Jewish people were to go and, you know, move forward and, and work to, to fix that, that instability.

But anyway, again, I've said the first

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my blog, I guess I didn't, I guess I didn't put it on my blog, maybe, but I've said that, you know, any, any, any linguistic explanation of the problem of evil.

And by that, I mean, you know, how can a good God allow this, this world to exist or whatever?

You know, in any, any, any linguistic explanation is going to be worse than the evil itself.

You know, the best thing we have is a cross to look at the crucifix.

Anyway, so this meditation is coming up on 20 minutes, so I'm going to wrap it up.

But suffice to say is that, you know, Jonah's disobedience was turned into a good thing for the people on the ship as I read, as I read it.

And so while we should not actively disobey, we can trust that, that God will somehow use our disobedience.

And I think it's St. Paul that says we shouldn't disobey so that God has more opportunities to do that.

But even when he does [and when we

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But I don't want to make this into some kind of, you know, principle, because that can cause lots of psychological damage to people when they are abused.

And people tell them that their abuse was for some greater good because at the end of the day, it's a mystery [or a mystery to the nth degree. Frankly I'd rather be a heretic than further wound people just so I can keep my intellectual categories in tact. And I would wager Jeus would too. And evil is evil and often the best thing that we can do—what busybody church people with our platitudes that we say to victims in order comfort ourselves and our own unresolved questions—is to shut the fuck up.]

And I'll leave it at that.

| [2 Comments](#)